



FIRST THINGS FIRST

Ready for School. Set for Life.

COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

Community Outreach – Regional Area Forums

In April, our focus in Community Outreach was to support Regional Partnership Councils in their local planning efforts to raise public awareness of the importance of early childhood development and health. Regional forums were held in Show Low, Globe, Tucson, Phoenix and Parker to bring together regional council members, regional directors and community outreach coordinators in a joint effort to identify outreach priorities and plan outreach activities for the next year.

The forums included a review of the FTF Strategic Communications plan, the priority audiences for outreach in fiscal years 2011 and 2012, exercises on the elements of planning successful outreach to a target audience, and work time so that regional councils could begin writing their local plans. The feedback from participants was very positive, especially from new regional council members who were not with First Things First when the Strategic Plan was developed and approved.

In addition to helping to plan and implement the regional forums, community outreach staff also participated in more than 100 community presentations, meetings or events to build public awareness of early childhood and FTF and collected an additional 30 success stories of programs and services benefitting kids and families throughout Arizona.

Paid Advertising

First Things First's spring media buy concluded in early May. The buy included television, radio, cinema, newspaper, grocery and online advertising. A detailed report, combining the impact of the fall and spring buys is being prepared and will be shared with the Board upon completion.

Earned Media/ Social Media

Since our last report, 33 stories about First Things First have been printed or broadcast throughout the state. This earned media coverage has been the result of efforts by our regional and community outreach staff, as well as our grantees. Almost one-fourth of the coverage came as a result of Week of the Young Child Events either hosted by or held in partnership with First Things First.

Our social media presences continues to grow. We have almost 1,800 fans on Facebook and about 80 people following First Things First on Twitter.

Smart Start Conference

The National Smart Start conference is the premier gathering of early childhood leaders, practitioners and advocates, drawing participants from all over the U.S. and as far away as Beijing, China.

Sessions are presented in 8 major areas, including policy, finance and communications.

First Things First presented information on its efforts to increase public information on the importance of early childhood development and health. Attendees were impressed with the strategic and comprehensive nature of FTF's efforts – which combine grassroots community outreach, media relations, and advertising. Participants in the session left with practical tools they could use to create their own public awareness effort and a sense of excitement over including public engagement as a critical component to building an effective, long-term commitment to early childhood.

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